

STARTING SOLIDS

Solids do not help young infants to sleep through the night. Starting solids too soon can:

- cause choking
- be hard for baby to digest
- cause food allergies
- prevent baby from getting enough breastmilk or formula

BABIES ARE READY FOR SOLIDS WHEN THEY CAN:

- Hold his/her neck steady
- Sit without support
- Open mouth when food is offered
- Draw in lower lip when spoon is removed from mouth
- Keep food in mouth and swallow it
- Reaches for food showing they want some

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



STEPS TO INFANT FEEDING

GENERAL TIPS



Feeding baby in the first year can be both exciting and challenging. It is important to relax and enjoy feeding time. You will learn what baby does to say “I’m hungry” or “I’m full”. Learn to be flexible. It will help you to know:

- Baby will eat different amounts of food at different times. Babies will each have their own pattern.
- Baby may show hunger by:
 - sucking on hands
 - making sucking movements
 - holding tight fist over stomach.
- When baby is full, he/she might:
 - spit out the nipple or food
 - fall asleep
 - play with or bite the nipple
 - play with the food
 - lie quiet and suck once in awhile
- Baby knows how much to eat. Do not force baby to eat it all.
- When baby cries, it does not always mean hunger. Baby might need a diaper change or to be held or cuddled. Learn which cry means hunger.



- Babies have growth spurts. They will eat more often when growing. Common times for growth spurts are:
 - 2 to 4 weeks
 - 3 months
 - 6 months
- It is a myth that cereal will help baby to sleep all night. Don’t start cereal or other solid food too early.
- Throw out leftover formula after each feeding. It should not be reheated and used. It may make baby sick.
- Always hold baby when feeding. Baby will feel more loved and secure. Propping the bottle can cause ear infections, promote tooth decay and make it easier for baby to choke.
- Honey should not be used during the first year. It can contain botulism, a deadly food poison.
- A little spitting up is normal. If you are concerned, ask your doctor, nurse or other health professional.
- To prevent tooth decay after baby’s teeth come in, try not to feed baby breastmilk or formula right before naptime or bedtime. After baby eats, be sure baby swallows to clear mouth of breastmilk or formula.



SUGGESTED DAILY FEEDING SCHEDULE

AGE	FOOD	AMOUNT DAILY	FEEDING HINTS BY AGE GROUP
Newborn to 4 weeks	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula	8–12 feedings or on demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Liquids are best because baby eats by suckling— Baby cannot swallow solid food— Baby should gain weight— Baby should have 6—8 wet diapers in 24 hours
1–2 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula	6-8 feedings or on demand OR 6–7 feedings of 2–4 oz. each	
3–4 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula	5–6 feedings or on demand OR 5–6 feedings of 4–7 oz. each	
5 – 6 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula	4–5 feedings or on demand OR 4–5 feedings of 6–8 oz. each	
4 – 6 months	Infant cereal Infant Juice	4–8 Tbsp. mixed, rice cereal 2–4 oz or 1/4 to 1/2 cup (from cup only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Teething is starting.— Start when baby is ready for solids— Feed solids from spoon— Give all juice from cup only— Use 100% infant juice
6 months	Meat Fruits/ vegetables	1-2 Tbsp. 2–4 Tbsp. Two times a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Use plain strained meats, one at a time— Offer one fruit or vegetable at a time, don't mix
7 – 8 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula Infant cereal Infant Juice Fruit Vegetable Meats Finger food	3–5 feedings or on demand OR 3–5 feedings 6–8 oz. Each 4–6 Tbsp. 2–4 Oz. (from cup only) 1–2 Tbsp. 5–7 Tbsp. 1–2 Tbsp. 1 small serving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Baby can chew. Try new flavors and food with more texture.— Start giving some breast—milk or iron fortified formula cup— Use plain, strained fruits and vegetables.— Avoid fruit desserts and combination meat and vegetable dinners.— Use plain, strained meats. Avoid combination or high protein dinners.— Finger food ideas: toast, crackers, teething biscuits, small dry cereals, banana, cooked carrots. Do not use bran cereals.
9 – 10 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula Infant cereal Infant Juice Fruit Vegetable Meats Finger food	3–4 feedings or on demand OR 3–4 feedings 6–8 oz. Each 4–6 Tbsp. 4 Oz. (from cup only) 6–8 Tbsp. 6–8 Tbsp. 4–6 Tbsp. small serving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Baby can bite and chew well.— Use foods with more texture, ie: chopped, diced, small chunks— Use cup often.— Offer water as desired.— Finger foods should be soft, well cooked, bite size pieces of table foods.— Avoid foods that can cause choking such as hot dogs, grapes, raw fruit, etc.
11 – 12 months	BREAST-MILK OR Iron Fortified Formula Infant cereal Infant Juice Fruits Vegetables Meats	3–4 feedings, or on demand OR 24–32 oz. Total per day 4–6 Tbsp. 4 oz. (from cup only) 1/2 cup or 8 Tbsp. 1/2 cup or 8 Tbsp. 1/2 cup or 2 oz.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Use the cup more and the bottle less.— Baby can use hands to feed self.— Baby can chew better so whole pieces of soft table foods can be offered.— Avoid foods that can cause choking such as hot dogs, grapes, raw fruit, etc.

Note: For solids, homemade or purchased baby foods my be used.

